



FREEDOM WATCH



June 18, 2002

Published in the interest of those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom

Bagram, Afghanistan

News briefs

(Compiled from
CNN.com)

Planned bombing stopped

CASABLANCA, Morocco — Moroccan intelligence agents located a suspected al Qaeda sleeper cell this week based on information provided them by the CIA and stopped the planned bombing of U.S. and British warships, a senior Moroccan official said Sunday.

UCCB policy cause for 'sorrow'

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' policy barring priests who sexually abuse children from ministerial duties targets "a cause for great sorrow," and the Vatican will likely support the guidelines, the organization's president said Sunday.

See **BRIEFS**, Page 3



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keven T. Bell, 55th Signal Company, Combat Camera

New recruits in formation at the Afghan National Army training site in Kabul, Afghanistan on May 15, 2002. U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers are being used to train the new army.

Afghan training making progress

By Sgt. Reeba Critser

28th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Raising an Afghan army is not an easy task, but it is progressing, said Col. Roger King, Combined Joint Task Force - 180 public affairs officer.

"The first battalion reached the middle of their cycle," King said at a press briefing Monday.

Soldiers from the 3rd Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C., teach basic infantry skills in Kabul. Approximately 350 Afghans make up one battalion,

King said. The average age for a soldier is 30.

King also noted that the second battalion's training started Monday with basic rifle marksmanship on the AK-

See **BASIC**, Page 2

Sept. 11 attacks change new Marine's outlook on life

By Cpl. Eric R. Lucero
U.S. Marine Corps

For a private who recently graduated with Platoon 3045, Company I, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, the opportunity to get away from his home state of New York has provided him with a new prospective on life.

Growing up in New York

and working his way through high school in an area of the lower east side of Manhattan, Pvt. Juan X. Pabon took a job on the nightshift of a discount retail store.

The store, located less than one mile from the site of the World Trade Center, is where

Pabon spent 40-50 hours a week working from 11 p.m. to 8 a.m.

On the morning of Sept. 11, Pabon left work on his way home. Before heading home, Pabon made a stop that ultimately may have saved his life.

"I stopped in a res-

taurant to grab some breakfast," said Pabon.

The time was 8:30 a.m., and as Pabon ate his meal, American Airlines Flight 111 was on a direct path towards New York. Fifteen minutes later, Pabon and the

See **MARINE**, Page 2



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kevin P. Bell
New recruits practice weapons maintenance after receiving a class from a U.S. Army Special Forces soldier at the Afghan National Army training site in Kabul.

BASIC, from Page 1

47s.

"They knew how to shoot when they got here (at the training site), but they're learning to aim," King said.

The Afghan government is responsible for recruiting soldiers. Special Forces soldiers train the Afghan army in 10-week rotations.

HIND SIGHT

1953

Egypt proclaimed a republic, General Neguib becomes president

1968

Supreme Court bans racial discrimination in sale and rental of housing

1976

NBA and ABA agree to merge

1980

"Blues Brothers" with Dan Akroyd and John Belushi premieres

1981

Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart retires (replaced by Sandra Day O'Connor, first woman on high court)

If you have story ideas, visit the 28th Public Affairs Detachment, located on the second floor of Motel 6 on Bagram Air Base, or email reeba.critser@us.army.mil.

MARINE, from Page 1

rest of the country had their lives and sense of security ripped from them.

At exactly 8:45 a.m., Flight 111 from Boston, crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center.

As Pabon left the restaurant, he witnessed what most of the rest of the nation could only see on television.

"As I stepped outside, people were running and you could see smoke and dust everywhere," described Pabon. "It looked like a scene straight out of the movies."

What most people could only imagine, Pabon experienced as United Airlines Flight 175, also from Boston, crashed into the south tower of the WTC, solidifying in everyone's minds this was no accident.

As the evacuation of the area surrounding the WTC began, Pabon and others were rushed to safety, the unthinkable occurred.

"I was about half a mile away from the site when it (the south tower) came down," said Pabon. "You could hear and feel it as it collapsed."

The time was now 10:05 a.m., and while New York scurried about in horrified confusion, Pabon and others continued toward the evacuation area.

Twenty-three minutes later, from about one mile away, Pabon turned to see the north tower join the other as it toppled to the ground.

Pabon describes the rest of the day as terror, sadness, confusion and anger all rolled into one single emotion.

Like the attack on

Pearl Harbor, so many individuals answered the call to arms immediately across the nation.

Although Pabon also chose to serve his country's armed forces, his situation was a bit different. He had already enlisted in the delayed entry program in September of 2000.

Due to problems early in school, Pabon was held back and consequently spent five years in high school before graduating and receiving his diploma. Pabon remembers getting into fights and receiving poor grades even though he knew he could do better.

"I got low grades in school, but I'm not stupid," said Pabon.

With no money for college and no chance at a scholarship due to grades, Pabon turned toward the Marine



Photo by Cpl. Eric Lucero

Pvt. Juan X. Pabon performs pushups during his basic training rotation.

Corps for a second chance.

"What I really wanted was the discipline," said Pabon. "I thought the Marine Corps would be able to clean me up."

Arriving on the island March 11, 2002, Pabon found all of what he was looking for in recruit training.

Pabon now describes himself as a person with a new way of looking at life and that fateful day that changed our lives forever back in

September.

"I feel like I did what I came here to do," Pabon said. "I definitely feel like a changed person with a new outlook on life."

After graduation, Pabon plans on returning to New York to visit his family before reporting to Camp Geiger, N.C., for Marine Combat Training before proceeding to Marine Corps Base Twenty-Nine Palms, Calif., for training as a command and control electrician.



Photo by Spc. Erica Leigh Foley

Bagram's World Cup

The Italian and Polish soccer teams had it out at camp Azzurro Sunday during a soccer tournament hosted by the Italian Air Force. Afterward the Italians offered pizza and wine in their air conditioned dining facility.

**The Bagram Dining Facility hours are
0700 - 0830 (L), and 1700 - 1900 (L)**

News briefs

BRIEFS, from Page 1

ATCs threaten protest

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Air traffic controllers across Europe are threatening to strike in protest over the implementation of a controversial “single sky” scheme which they say threatens safety. Supporters say it will reduce congestion and delays for travelers.

Hussein may be ousted

WASHINGTON — Several key congressional leaders said Sunday they supported quick and decisive action to topple Saddam Hussein from the presidency of Iraq — including, if necessary, a military strike.

Israeli fence may stop bombers

JERUSALEM — Israel began construction Sunday on what is intended to be a 217-mile (350-km) fence designed to keep suicide bombers out of Israel. The fence is being built along the hitherto-unmarked border between Israel and the West Bank, which Israel has occupied for the past 35 years.

Local weather

TWO-DAY AFGHANISTAN WEATHER REPORT:

| | <u>Today</u> | <u>Wednesday</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <u>Bagram:</u> | Showers H: 93F L: 64F | Partly Cloudy H: 95F L: 66F |
| <u>Kandahar:</u> | Haze H: 104F L: 68F | Haze H: 108F L: 68F |
| <u>Khowst:</u> | Thunderstorms H: 99F L: 72F | Haze H: 100F L: 68F |

Weather courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

FREEDOM WATCH

Freedom Watch falls under the supervision of the Combined Joint Task Force - 180.

- ❖ CJTF - 180 Commanding General — Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill
- ❖ CJTF - 180 Command Sergeant Major — Command Sgt. Maj. Steven R. England
- ❖ Public Affairs Officer — Col. Roger King
- ❖ Public Affairs Sergeant Major — Sgt. Maj. C.J. Costello

Freedom Watch, an Army newspaper publication, is produced by the 28th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

- ❖ Commander — Capt. Timothy Beninato
- ❖ NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Rhonda Lawson
- ❖ Editor — Sgt. Reeba Critser
- ❖ Sports Editor — Spc. Alfredo Jimenez Jr.
- ❖ Journalists — Spc. Jason Allgood, Spc. Erica Leigh Foley, Pfc. Nathan Akridge and Pfc. Eleazar Craig.

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas. Contents of *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

All submissions are subject to editing for size and content by the 28th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Motel 6, CJTF - 180, Bagram Air Base.

To be added to the distribution list, e-mail Reeba.Critser@us.army.mil.

COALITION SPORTSZONE

Mexicans cheer, but Americans go home happy

SportsLine.com wire reports

JEONJU, South Korea — The Mexicans came in singing. The Americans went out laughing.

For the first time, the United States won a knockout game in the World Cup against its southern neighbor and traditional soccer rival, Mexico.

"I really didn't think we could do this," said Kaela Porter, from Boston outside Jeonju Stadium after the 2-0 victory.

Porter was one of an estimated 3,000 U.S. soccer supporters outshouted and outsung by some 10,000 green-clad Mexicans for most of the match.

"That's been the way since the start of the tournament. We're always the underdog," said Shannon Foster, from Los Angeles, girlfriend of U.S. player Cobi Jones.

But the crowd pressure didn't bother the U.S. team. By the eighth minute it was up 1-0 on a goal by Brian McBride, and in the 65th minute Landon Donovan headed in a second on a gorgeous cross from Eddie Lewis. The first goal stunned the Mexican fans, but the second zapped them into silence. Gone was the merriment and on came the dejection. As they went mum, the little pocket of some 1,000 U.S. fans to the right of one of the goals became all the

more raucous.

"There was too much pressure in this game," said Francisco Cardenas, from Guadalajara, Mexico. "Mexico dominated, but it couldn't concentrate enough to get a goal. I would have preferred to lose to any other team."

Few things could have been worse for the Mexicans.

"Only not qualifying for the World Cup would have been harder to take than this," said Gregorio Hidalgo, a 28-year-old sales manager from Mexico City. "Every time we play the United States it's like this. We have let them play us too often in friendlies, and now they know how to handle us."

By the closing minutes of the game, the stadium was half-empty as droves of Mexican fans drifted out early. The U.S. fans stayed on, cheering their soccer heroes far beyond the final whistle.

Outside, the Mexicans trudged away as if in mourning, with none of the customary horn-blowing or drum-pounding.

Close by, U.S. fans relished the victory quietly, obviously not wishing to openly rub it in.

"I predicted the game to be 2-1, but I never dreamed of 2-0," said Sgt. 1st Class Rich Smith of Colorado. "I hate to see the Mexicans leave, they are our bosom buddies here.



Associated Press photos
Suspended Frankie Hejduk watches and celebrates along with the U.S. fans Monday.

"But this is round of 16 and someone has got to go home ... better them than us."

Smith was one of eight members from the small U.S. base at Yongin to attend the match.

"It was beautiful to see the United States team come back and start playing well again after Poland (a 3-1 loss)," said Maj. Todd Curry, intelligence chief at Yongin.

"The first game they came out and amazed the world. They played Korea in a very tough game and played them to a 1-1 tie. Against Poland they seemed to fall even further. Today they came back and displayed their potential.

"It's nothing special beating Mexico, it's special



USA's Brian McBride shoots through a crowd of Mexico defenders to score his team's first goal.

winning the game and moving to the next level," Curry said.

George Hejduk, father of U.S. defender Frankie Hejduk, who missed the game with a suspension, saw the victory as a statement.

"The United States has finally got above Mexico as far as soccer. We have surpassed them

now," Hejduk said.

But it was friendship which ruled the day, especially outside the stadium. A group of U.S. supporters had their photographs taken with Korean riot police, then were joined spontaneously by a group of some 20 Mexican children. Together they chanted "USA, Mexico Oe, Oe Oe."